DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 438 913 PS 028 331

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TITLE The Men They Will Become: The Nature and Nurture of Male Character.
ISBN ISBN-0-7382-0113-8
PUB DATE 1999-00-00
NOTE 372p.
AVAILABLE FROM HarperCollins Publishers, 1000 Keystone Park, Scranton, PA 18512-4251 ($25). Tel: 800-242-7737 (Toll Free); Web site: http://www.perseusbooks.com.
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; Child Development; *Child Rearing; *Children; Cultural Influences; Discipline; Emotional Development; Individual Development; *Males; Masculinity; Moral Development; *Parent Child Relationship; Personality; Personality Development; Resilience (Personality); Sex Differences; *Socialization; Sons; Teacher Student Relationship
IDENTIFIERS *Character Development; Identity Formation

ABSTRACT

Noting that characteristics such as attachment, honesty, self control, sportsmanship, generosity, and courage may be nurtured or thwarted by parents, teachers, or society, this book examines the roots of male character from birth to late adolescence. It maintains that particular intrinsic biological drives combine with parenting styles and gender-polarizing cultural forces to create character. Highlighted with stories of boys' experiences, the book illustrates challenges that create character and offers guidance for nurturing and encouraging the qualities that make boys different from girls. The topics covered are: (1) "What Is Character?" (2) "The Roots of Character," providing a framework for understanding how relationships provide the foundation for character development; (3) "Infants and Toddlers," discussing infant senses, early self control, and sociability; (4) "Male Connection and Emotion," focusing on attachment relationships; (5) "Word Magic," highlighting the role of language to express emotions; (6) "Discipline and Punishment"; (7) "Preschoolers," including gender consciousness, play, guns, books, and television; (8) "Sharing," including parental and societal influences, and friendliness as sharing oneself; (9) "Curiosity"; (10) "Schoolboys," including school transitions, friendship, self esteem, and early tests of character; (11) "Honesty"; (12) "Self-Control"; (13) "Teasing and Bullying"; (14) "Early Adolescence," including father- and mother-son relationships and risk factors; (15) "Identity and Friendship"; (16) "Alcohol and Drugs"; (17) "Late Adolescence," discussing diverging tracks, delinquency, and sexuality; (18) "Enabling," including parental complicity in self-destructive behavior and positive ways to support character; (19) "Cheating"; (20) "Play and Sports"; and (21) "Giving Back," discussing idealism, the true self, and reciprocity. Each chapter contains references. (KB)

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